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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/575,717

04/12/2006

Wolfgang Pfeiffer

10191/4577

3532

26646

7590

02/05/2009

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EXAMINER

WILLIAMS, MAURICE L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3611

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/05/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/575,717	Applicant(s) PFEIFFER ET AL.	
	Examiner MAURICE WILLIAMS	Art Unit 3611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 October 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 26-28 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 13-17, 19-21, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner et al. (US 6,138,788) in view of Laurent et al. (US 2003/0098197). Bohner discloses:

An electromechanical coupling (**13**) which is actuated to be closed when no electrical energy is provided (col. 5, ln. 30-35) and open when energy is provided; two mechanical devices connected to the coupling, the first being a steering wheel (**9**) and the second a steered wheel (**1**). Bohner does not directly disclose the use of at least two windings which control the coupling and are connected to electrical control units having power supplies. Laurent discloses at least two windings (contained in mechanical controllers **61-63**) with control units each using a trigger element (signals from sensors **21-23**) and having different power supplies (**91**) and data lines (**661-663**); and a control unit (**6**) with an element (**90**) for supplying the windings with electrical energy.

Therefore it would have been obvious to person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bohner as taught by Laurent in order to provide a redundant check on the electrical system to ensure that it has failed before switching to the mechanical connection.

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3. Claims 18, 22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bohner in view of Laurent as applied to claims 13 and 20 above, and further in view of Bohner et al. (Bohner II) (US 6,220,385). Bohner and Laurent disclose as discussed above, but do not directly disclose sensors to detect the functioning of the coupling unit. Bohner II discloses a sensor (**15**) which indicates the status of the coupler (**6**). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Bohner as taught by Laurent and Bohner II in order to provide a system which would monitor whether the system is operating in mechanical mode.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 26-28 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 10/27/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Although the Laurent reference does not teach a mechanical connection, the teaching of the windings with control units could be combined with the electro-mechanical system of Bohner, which is provided as the primary reference.

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MAURICE WILLIAMS whose telephone number is (571)272-4263. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on (571) 272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


/Maurice Williams/
Examiner, Art Unit 3611

Maurice Williams
Examiner
Art Unit 3611

MLW
February 1, 2009

/Paul N. Dickson/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3611

<div>Application Number</div> <div></div>	Application/Control No.	Applicant(s)/Patent under Reexamination	
	10/575,717	PFEIFFER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	MAURICE WILLIAMS	3611	